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In the drawings:

Figure 1 is a side view of an elastic flexible body according to the invention,

Figure 2 is the axial section II-II in Figure 1 and

Figures 3 to 8 show various collar bushings according to the invention for use in flexible bodies, for example, of the type which is represented in Figures 1 and 2.

Figures 1 and 2 represent a flexible body 10 which is provided, for example, to connect together two steering shaft portions of a motor vehicle such that they can move like a universal joint. The flexible body 10 comprises four elongate loop sets 12 and 12', i.e. two for the loop sets 12 which are at the top for the observer in Figures 1 and 2 and which - related to their longitudinal direction L - are arranged parallel to one another, as well as two bottom loop sets 12' which - again related to their longitudinal directions L' - are arranged parallel to one another, although at a right angle to the loop sets 12. All the loop sets 12 and 12' are wound in the conventional manner from threads or wire, in the represented example in the shape of the figure 8. The two top loop sets 12 each have two head curves 14, while the two bottom loop sets 12' each have two head curves 14', which overlap with a respective head curve 14. In the represented example each of the head curves 14 and 14' is slightly more than semicircular. In the overlap regions of their head curves 14 and 14' the loop sets 12 and 12' form a respective hole passing through parallel to the axis A of the flexible body 10, through which hole a bushing 16 is passed.

Each of the bushings 16 comprise at their two ends a collar 18 and 18', respectively, i.e. a collar 18 facing the observer in Figure 1 and arranged at the top in Figures 2 to 8 and a collar 18' arranged at the bottom in Figures 2 to 8. All the collars 18 and 18' predominantly (Figures 1 to 4) or exclusively (Figures 5 to 8) project in the longitudinal direction L and L', respectively, away from the associated bushing 16 and, according to the arrangement of the loop set winding around this associated bushing, are arranged such that they essentially only support the head curves 14 and 14', respectively, thereof in the axial direction of the bushing.

The collars 18 and 18' are - for example according to Figures 1 to 4 - circular, although arranged in an offset, i.e. eccentric fashion towards the associated head curve 14 or 14' with respect to the circular cross section of the associated bushing 16 in the longitudinal direction L or L' of a loop set 12 or 12' winding around this bushing and axially supported at the relevant collar 18 or 18', although have the shape of a respective rectangle which is rounded at its narrow sides and the width of which is just as large or just slightly larger than the outside diameter of the associated bushing 16. According to Figures 7 and 8, each bushing comprises at its two ends a rounded-rectangular collar 18 and 18', respectively, which only projects away on one side and the width of which corresponds to the outside diameter of the bushing 16.

The collars 18 and 18' which are represented in Figures 3, 5 and 7 project in the same direction away from the associated bushing 16 and are intended either to just accommodate one loop set 16 between them or to accommodate two loop sets 16 with the same longitudinal direction L, between which a loop set 16' with the longitudinal direction L' (Figure 1) can be arranged.

According to Figures 4, 6 and 8, however, the bottom collar 18' of each bushing 16 is offset with respect to the top collar 18 by an angle α of 90° ; this corresponds to the arrangement of the loop sets 12 and 12' which is represented in Figures 1 and 2 and in which the longitudinal direction L' of the bottom loop sets 12' is turned through the angle α of 90° with respect to the longitudinal direction L of the top loop sets 12.

If - in a manner which differs from Figures 1 and 2 - the flexible body 10 comprises, instead of four bushings 16, six bushings 16, for example, and a corresponding number of loop sets 12 and 12', respectively, the longitudinal directions L and L' of which form an angle of α of 120° with one another, then the collars 18 and 18', at which the associated loop sets 12 and 12', respectively, are supported, are turned through the angle α of 120° with respect to one another.

In all the represented embodiments the bushing 16 with the two associated collars 18 and 18' can be produced in one piece, for example by injection from a plastics material, in particular polyamide. It is, however, also possible to produce the bushing 16 with one of its two collars 18 or 18' in one piece and fasten the other, separately produced collars to the end of the bushing remote from the first-mentioned collar by means of a snap-action connection. The second collar may in this case be locked onto the bushing in different angular positions, i.e. at different angles α . This measure enables arrangements which are mirror images of those represented in Figures 4 and 8 to be obtained in addition to the arrangements represented in Figures 3 to 8.

In all the represented examples the collars 18 and 18' comprise holes 22, so that they can be firmly secured when vulcanised into the rubber-elastic casing 20.